Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

Do what you are doing now, suffer what you are suffering now: to do all this with holiness nothing need be changed but your hearts. Sanctity consists in *willing* what happens to us by God's command.

— de Caussade.

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OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

22 East 29th Street New York 16, N.Y.

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GOD'S MERCIES

GOD MADE SUN AND MOON to distinguish seasons, and day, and night, and we cannot have the fruits of the earth but in their seasons: but God hath made no decree to distinguish the seasons of his mercies. In paradise the fruits were ripe the first minute, and in heaven it is always autumn, his mercies are ever in their maturity. We ask our daily bread, and God never says you should have come yesterday, he never says you must again tomorrow, but today if you will hear his voice, today he will hear you. If some King of the earth have so large an extent of dominion in North and South, as that he hath winter and summer together in his dominions, so large an extent East and West as that he hath day and night together in his dominions, much more hath God mercy and judgment together. He brought light out of darkness, not out of a lesser light; he can bring thy Summer out of Winter, though thou have no Spring; though in the ways of fortune, or understanding, or conscience, thou have been benighted till now, wintered and frozen, clouded and eclipsed, damped and benumbed, smothered and stupefied will till now God comes to thee, not as in the dawning of the day, not as in the bud of the spring, but as the Sun at noon to illustrate all shadows, as the sheaves in harvest, to fill all penuries; all occasions invite his mercies, and all times are his seasons.

— John Donne (1571-1631)

EDITORIAL

SAINTS AND OURSELVES

Among the many things that have departed from the world, which once were widely ubiquitous in it, is the study and veneration of saints, the acceptance of the saint as the way-shower for other spiritual aspirants. For us, in our increasingly materialistic culture, where sense-experience becomes our dominant experience and the visible world the exclusive reality, the figure of the saint grows ever more remote and unreal, for his is the life in which the divine reality is an ever-present fact, and nearness to God an experience daily reinforced and moment by moment renewed. This loss of contact with the inner meaning of saints' lives has been a tragic one.

But lawyers tell us that ignorance of law is no excuse, and scientists point out that universal principles of mechanics will operate whether we remember them or not. So we have only ourselves to blame if we rob our spiritual lives of the sustenance and beauty, and the meaning, which a close study of the saints would bestow upon them. And if, lacking mighty exemplars to guide and strengthen our course forward, we flounder and suffer needlessly, and wonder if all our struggle is worth the effort, we have only ourselves to blame. It will turn out, in a final analysis, that *we chose not* to identify ourselves too closely with the saints, in any meaningful manner, because we did not want to commit ourselves to that extent and allowed our earth-loving vanities to furnish convenient motives for turning away from the light of saints to feed upon the darkness of our egos.

Hence all who, through whatever motives of self-persuasion, try consciously to live a spiritual life without seeking a model among some great saintly figure of the past, are manifesting a strange, ruinous kind of egoism and ignorance that, upon reflection, has no parallel in worldly undertakings.

To gain superiority in any field we seek the knowledge and example of those who have excelled in it. The potential artist makes a systematic study of the masters of painting, to discover the best that has been done in the past; the young poet saturates himself in the works of great poets whose names have outlasted centuries, and seeks to know why these particular names have endured; the youthful musician memorizes

the accomplishments of famous composers, analyzes what they have done, before he attempts his own individual style. If we wish to gain mastery in any subject whatever, requiring a long investigation, we consult experts and authorities and, if necessary, study with them, follow their counsel, develop along lines which they suggest, until what is truly original in us begins to emerge.

No one will assert that the life of the spirit is a life easier, less challenging than these. But in the field of religion alone we act as if no teacher, no universally acknowledged model were necessary, that we can be our own teachers, our own inspirations, that God will guide us directly as he guided St. Paul and the prophets and Buddha and Mohammed in the desert! It is strange, but true, that millions of people, on their own initiative, attribute to themselves a grandeur and spirituality that only a handful of great souls have known. But while making this assumption, they seldom equal, in perseverance and dedication, the greatness of these luminaries in their struggle to uncover and manifest the divinity within them. Few are prepared to spend years in the solitude of a wilderness, as they did, fighting with themselves. Those who are not, should cease making statements about the grace of God, alone, being sufficient for them.

We must imitate someone, we cannot help ourselves. Consciously or unconsciously we will do so. Let us make the imitation as conscious as possible: which means we have chosen some model by which we can develop our characters and more quickly attain the lineaments of what we truly are. If we refuse to imitate anyone, even a great person, endowed with a universal type of greatness, as a genuine saint is, *we will be condemned to imitate ourselves* and to go on repeating mannerisms and drawing forever on our shallow and pathetic little stock of originality. Since we must imitate, let us imitate the best we can. If we are spiritual aspirants, the best we can find are the saints. They are, for us, what the great masters and sages and geniuses are in the various arts, the models for all succeeding generations.

We can imitate Christ, some will object. He is enough, he will be our model. Christ, no doubt, is a supreme model. But for whom? For saints themselves. An incarnation of God cannot be held up for imitation by ordinary people lacking his power, his grace, his wisdom, his love, his endurance, his humility, his faith, his will, his destiny. We are not being asked to save mankind, to take upon our shoulders the salvation

of a world. *We* do not have the power to work his miracles, to create saints, to persuade people to give up everything for us in a moment. The stars do not record our birth; our death does not disturb the elements. If *we* are crucified it will not bring about a world revolution. The impact of *our* life on our time will not shake the earth to its foundation. Those who say there is no real difference between themselves and Christ should pause to remember these things.

Only those who have become *Christ-like* may imitate him. When we are spiritual enough we may imitate him ourselves. Until then the saints and mystics should be our models. The words and life of Christ are, admittedly, the greatest source of inspiration for us. He, and a very few others, are the only universal figures, speaking to all men without exception at all times, as only they could. They are the great saviours of the world, *without whom there would be no saints* and without whom humanity would long ago have perished in the fires of its own greed and sensuality. They and they alone are the ones who can truly convince us that victory is possible, that there is a way out for us, that God is real, the soul immortal, man himself divine, that death is not for any man the end of anything. Only the greatest ones, no doubt, can convince us of these things. As we go forward we hold above our path the eternal light of their teachings, the perpetual inspiration of their lives. But the lives of the saints, those who stand mid-way between the world saviours and ourselves, should be our more immediate source of guidance and encouragement, of which all of us stand in perennial need.

The biographies and sayings of these holy men and women, of all religions, is the most productive and vital reading we can administer to our minds and is, indeed, second only to meditation in its influence on our spiritual lives. If we are not in earnest about religion but merely want to play at it, restlessness, impatience, and irrepressible criticism will deprive us of any benefit from this reading and we will conclude that we would not want to be saints ourselves. But if we are in earnest, if we want to break the hold of nature on our lives, achieve self-control, discover how to overcome egoism and draw near to the Divine Being, the lives of saints are an almost indispensable help, providing *our* lives with a special strength and richness. For the saints are the heroes and champions of religion, the experts in spiritual life for all time. They are the great moulds of holiness which we must copy and incorporate into our own lives, the immortal mirrors by gazing into which, deeply and selflessly, with enough yearning and need, we will remember where we came from, why we are here, and who we really are. We shall find ourselves.

HERE AND NOW

HERE, where you stand is the path of possibility. Because your life is linked with Universal Intelligence many avenues of accomplishments spread out in front of you. Opportunities are yours if you will only use them. Whatever your outward purpose may be, your inward purpose must be to serve: to give light, to experience harmony in place of disharmony. Transcendent purposes alone can bring you lasting satisfactions. If, from this moment, you will seek to incorporate strength into your own life, then all necessary things will be added whereby you can strengthen and influence other lives.

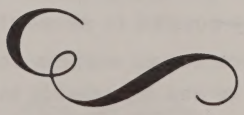
NOW, is the time for a new beginning. Why do you think that you have to sit around and wait? Wait for what? You are fully equipped for the tasks before you. Let others do what they may, or say what they like, it is for you to cherish what you know. Only in this way will you have the knowledge to turn every evil into good, every curse into a blessing, every untruth into truth.

HERE AND NOW—not at some distant place or in some other far-off moment—you must put into practice the beliefs you hold vital to your happiness. Each gift of your spirit awaits its discovery at your own level of awareness. Those who make their faith a living, breathing thing, find the gold of satisfaction at the end of each day's Rainbow. Determine, therefore, to let these vital beliefs become iridescent in the midst of your daily life!

HERE, WHERE YOU STAND is the path of possibility.

NOW, IS THE TIME for a new beginning.

—Rabbi Ernest R. Trattner



THREE CROSSES

Janet Hackney

THREE CROSSES STOOD against a blood-red sky. The man on each of them had been offered a sponge dipped in a mixture of wine and laudanum. Two had sucked greedily, but the third had refused with a shake of his head, which was crowned with a band of thorns.

From time to time either of the two on the outer crosses would faint for a minute of blackness until the jeers of the crowd roused him back to unwelcome consciousness.

The soldiers were casting lots, as was their custom at the execution of a prisoner. Two of the robes were of common brown sacking, but the other robe was a rare prize to any one who won it by a lucky throw of the dice. It was beautifully and carefully woven by some weaver with painstaking efforts of detail and smoothness— as if made with love.

THE PEOPLE STARED or sneered. A few sobbed. The one in the center was speaking: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Those near enough to hear the softly-spoken words were deeply impressed.

The criminal on the right began a hoarse mumbling of curses. "—Man, if you are the Christ, save us and yourself."

But the one on the left said, "Do you not fear God? It's fair enough for us, for we are getting what we deserve. But this man never did anything wrong in his life."

"Why are you so sure?" asked the second thief. "He is a Galilean."

"I am from Galilee too, and we roamed the hills together as children. We watched the birds build their nests, tracked foxes to their dens, picked the lillies in the fields. Jesus was always gentle with all birds and animals and they seemed to sense that he was their friend. We romped in the market places as our mothers chatted at the wells. I think he must remember me, for he was remarkable in every way."

TIME CRAWLED slowly on.

"Lord," said the first thief. "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

By now the sky had turned dark as night as if the sun's light had failed.

"...Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise..."

Soon afterwards Jesus breathed his last.

The army captain in attendance fell on his knees, as he thought: "This man was truly the son of God."

EASTER LILIES

Head bowed in solemn prayer,
The Cross before my mind,
Supplicant tears fill my eyes,
Ease and comfort I find.
In my faith in God,
As I walk the path of life,
His love guides me along,
Through storm and strife.
And though His loss,
Was my immeasured gain,
Like Easter lilies on the Cross,
His sacrifice does me sustain.

— *Maud Strike*

THE CHRIST OF EASTER

Dr. W. J. Thompson

IN HIS STORY of the Resurrection of Christ, John tells us (20:1): "On the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre." These words reveal the eagerness of Mary to visit the tomb of Jesus at the earliest possible moment, but as she stood there in the early morning she made a great mistake! The one she longed for stood near her, and we read—"She supposed he was the gardener." Hoping to gain information about the location of the Master's body, Mary said, "Sir, if you have removed him, tell me where he is." Then the figure nearby turned toward her and uttered just one word—her own name—"Mary!" That single word changed grief to gladness unspeakable as Mary knew (the first human being to know) that Christ had risen from the dead, and the hope of humanity was now a radiant reality!

Let us turn to another scene on the evening of that same day....

DARKNESS had descended on the city of Jerusalem, and a little group of Christ's followers had met secretly in a secluded house. The door was barred, the windows covered, and the disciples were talking quietly of the strange events of that day when suddenly they realized someone else was in the room with them. Remembering the locked door, the dark windows, and the careful precautions taken to keep out all others, they were afraid, for "they supposed they had seen a spirit." (Luke 24: 37). Just then a voice they all knew, and loved, spoke—"Peace be unto you"—and all in the room rejoiced in the knowledge that Christ had risen, and was with them!

If we put these two incidents together—Mary in the garden mistaking the figure of Jesus for a gardener, and the little company of followers in a secluded house mistaking him for a ghost—we have a wonderful lesson concerning Christ.

SO MANY MAKE the mistake Mary made long ago in the garden, by accepting an earthly explanation of the Lord. They think of him as an earthly figure, a human friend or leader, when all the time he is infinitely beyond these human measurements and earthly explanations. The mistake about Jesus by the group of disciples was exactly the opposite of Mary's mistake. She mistook the Master for a familiar earthly figure—a gardener; while the little band of followers mistook him for a mysterious and un-

earthly spirit—a ghost. The glorious truth is that Christ is neither a gardener nor a ghost!

IT IS NOT ENOUGH to think of him as a man, for he is to be worshipped as our Lord; and it is wrong to think of him as a remote and strange spirit—because he calls us to love and follow him. It is a tragic mistake to emphasize only his humanity, and ignore his deity; and it is equally mistaken to make Christ unreal and ghostly—for he has promised to stay with us now and forever.

Let us worship Jesus Christ for what he really is—the matchless blend of the seen and the unseen, of time and eternity joined together, our Lord forevermore.

TO A SAINT IN THE MOONLIGHT

Paled
You are
And quite serene,
Veiled
In silver
Like a queen.

Chaste
As heaven's
Silken bowl,
Laced
In semblance
Of my soul.

Dowered
In the love
Of God,
Scoured
Of the clinging
Sod.

Saint,
I hail you
In the night.
Paint
My darkened
Mind with light.

— Lawrence Johnson

A CHILD'S FAITH

Velta Myrle Allen

AS A CHILD growing up at home, family prayer was an evening ritual. When each child learned to read, we took turns reading a Bible chapter, and then my father would kneel at his chair, followed by each of us, and he would pray. Grace was always said at each meal, and each child learned eventually to take turns, saying a little prayer.

Looking back today, it seems to me it was the "tie that binds". It was an interlude of the day when the family was united and in harmony, both physically and spiritually, and always it left us with a refreshed attitude and a baptism of renewed faith.

WHEN ONE IS GROWING up, the custom of the times and day is accepted without question. The small child is not conscious of differences of color in the selection of a playmate. He accepts all things in the newness and wonderment of life itself. And so in prayer, he does not question the efficacy of the spoken word, nor those who are more mature in years.

Then the years begin to overtake us and we start questioning. We forget those first beautiful years of faith, hope and love. And in so doing, we begin to lose our security. We pray, and wonder why our prayers are not answered. Perhaps we forget that "except ye become as a little child, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven," or that God knoweth our needs even before we ask.

MAN WAS PLACED upon the earth and given dominion over all things. We are not puppets dangling on the end of a string. We are gifted with the power of reasoning and are free to make our own heaven or hell. When we pray for peace we should keep in mind the fact that "Peace Begins With Me". If we pray as one family sincerely, and together, the baptism of faith in one another could well lead us out of the wilderness where men have lost God.

ALMIGHTY GOD, help us with mind and heart to build the church universal, where there is a place for all ancient wisdom and all modern thought; which finds in all prophecies a harmony, in all scriptures a unity, and in all life a reflection of Thy will.

— Elizabeth Fritzsche

CAUSE AND EFFECT

THE MORE ONE THINKS about it, the more one wonders that man could ever discredit the law of cause and effect. If a person plants potatoes in the garden, he can hardly hope to reap roses, and if he hates he can hardly expect to escape being hated in return. Action and reaction, effort and result, are akin to cause and effect, with like attracting like. This is the substance of the Law.

Merely to wish and wait is not enough: one must work on the job of self-improvement too. Then, when the demonstration or effect of the cause he has worked upon comes about, he can receive and enjoy it on a fuller scale. Water takes the shape of the pipe through which it flows, and man's demonstrations will be realized according to his capacities for realization.

TO PUT FORTH EFFORT and then to wait in doubt is to shrink in stature. Life is a battleground, but if man neglects to act and if he avoids the fight, he is weakening his growth and cheating his maturity.

Cause and effect is a fact and growth is a habit. The direction into which man grows is a matter of thought and will, but the only manner in which man develops a habit, be it bad or good, is through experience. Action, therefore, even when it results in error, is far better than inaction which, in turn, results in stagnation.

THE LAW COMMANDS: man has been given a gigantic duty and that is that he go forward to meet his destiny and reap the harvest of his plantings.

— Carla Patsuris

If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will. But it feels *like a real fight—as if there were something really wild in the universe which we, with all our idealities and faithfulnesses, are needed to redeem.*

— William James

SELECTIONS FROM PLATO

(The following are famous and representative passages from the writings of the man who has been called by most perceptive students of philosophy the greatest and most important thinker of Western civilization.)

DIVINE WISDOM

AND NOW, I SAID, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened. Behold human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

YOU HAVE SHOWN ME a strange image, and strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied. And they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

True, he said. How could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them? And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to imagine when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

To them the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

AND NOW LOOK AGAIN, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive someone saying to him that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision,—what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them,—will he not be perplexed? Will he not feel that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

AND SUPPOSE ONCE MORE that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he is forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

And he will need to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and will he not see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is. He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the seasons and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold.

Clearly, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

AND WHEN HE REMEMBERED his old habitation, and the wis-

dom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honors among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together, and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honors and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not endure anything rather than think as they do and live after their manner?

Yes, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

Imagine once more, I said, such a one coming suddenly out of the sun to take his place in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness? And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still dim, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit might be considerable), would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that he had returned from his journey aloft with his eyes ruined, and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death....

THE PRISON-HOUSE IS THE WORLD of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world... My opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

Moreover, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls

are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural.

AND IS THERE ANYTHING surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or the shadows of images of justice, and is endeavoring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?.. .

HENCE those professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like vision into blind eyes. Our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the contemplation of being, and of the brightest and best of being, the good.

— From Chapter VII, THE REPUBLIC

DIVINE LOVE

THE CANDIDATE FOR INITIATION into the mysteries of Love must grasp that the beauties of the body are as nothing to the beauties of the soul, so that wherever he meets with spiritual loveliness, even in the husk of an unlovely body, he will find it beautiful enough to fall in love with and to cherish—and beautiful enough to quicken in his heart a longing for such discourse as tends toward the building of a noble nature. And from this he will be led to contemplate the beauty of laws and institutions. And when he discovers how nearly every kind of beauty is akin to every other he will conclude that the beauty of the body is not, after all, of so great moment.

And next, his attention should be diverted from insitutions to the sciences, so that he may know the beauty of every kind of knowledge. And thus, by scanning beauty's wide horizon, he will be saved from a slavish and illiberal devotion to the individual loveliness of a single person or a single institution. And, turning his eyes toward the open sea of beauty, he will find in such contemplation the seed of the most fruitful

discourse and the loftiest thought, and reap a golden harvest of philosophy, until, confirmed and strengthened, he will come upon one single form of knowledge, the knowledge of the beauty I am about to speak of.

WHOEVER HAS BEEN initiated so far in the mysteries of Love and has viewed all these aspects of the beautiful in due succession, is at last drawing near the final revelation. And now there bursts upon him that wondrous vision which is the very soul of the beauty he has toiled so long for. It is an everlasting loveliness which neither comes nor goes, which neither flowers nor fades, for such beauty is the same on every hand, the same then as now, here as there, this way as that, the same to every worshipper as it is to every other.

Nor will his vision of the beautiful take the form of a face, or of hands, or of anything that is of the flesh. It will be neither words, nor knowledge, nor a something that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens, or anything that is—but subsisting of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness, while every lovely thing partakes of it in such sort that, however much the parts may wax and wane, it will be neither more nor less, but still the same inviolable whole.

And so, when his prescribed devotion to physical beauties has carried our candidate so far that the universal beauty dawns upon his inward sight, he is almost within reach of the final revelation. And this is the way, the only way, he must approach, or be led toward, the sanctuary of Love. Starting from individual beauties, the quest for the universal beauty must find him ever mounting the heavenly ladder, stepping from rung to rung...until at last he comes to know what beauty is.

AND IF MAN'S LIFE IS ever worth the living, it is when he has attained this vision of the very soul of beauty. And once you have seen it, you will never be seduced again by the charm of gold, of dress, of comeliness, of youth; you will care nothing for the beauties that used to take your breath away and kindle such a longing in you to be always at the side of the beloved.

But if it were given to man to gaze on beauty's very self—unsullied, unalloyed, and freed from the mortal taint that haunts the frailer loveliness of flesh and blood—if, I say, it were given to man to see the heavenly beauty face to face, would you call his an unenviable

life, whose eyes had been opened to the vision, and who had gazed upon it in true contemplation until it had become his own forever?

AND REMEMBER, that it is when he looks upon beauty's visible presentment, and only then, that a man will be quickened with the true, and not the seeming, virtue—for it is virtue's self that quickens him, not virtue's semblance. And when he has brought forth and reared this perfect virtue, he shall be called the friend of God, and if ever it is given to man to put on immortality, it shall be given to him.

— From the SYMPOSIUM

ADMONITION

(For a Pack Peddler)

No sudden secret of the rippling land
Is bared this one ignoring time to stand
In contemplation, grateful for the while
That eases plodding of the constant mile,
Losing view of rosy-silvered cloud,
Shoulders stooped, tired head bowed,
Missing, too, the song bird's wildest note,
His own thoughts louder than the sweetest throat;
Who gives no voice to good, nor hour to prayer,
Condemning, grim, embittered, burdened where
He mumbles over paths that living sends,
Complaining that a circle never ends,
Gone blind to all that Nature might reveal,
Unmindful that a circle is a wheel.

— Carla Patsuris

AS THE TIDE TURNS

ALL MY LIFE THE SEA has held a fascination for me. Within its many and varied moods I have found an answer to my own emotional and spiritual needs. Unlike the calm of the mountain lake, the eternal sweeping grandeur of the ever-moving waters have enthralled me with their moody spell. No matter how turbulent the passions which have engulfed me, I have found a strange and healing peace along the shore.

The scope and cosmic motion of the universe itself seem to be reflected in this great mass of energy, life and movement. There is truth in the tranquility of the mountain waters but here this vitality and surge of the tidal ebb and flow brings a unique peace which I seek. The knowledge that God is an eternal moving source of Life seems to echo in this ever-changing, re-creative vital life-force demonstrated in the patterns of the sea.

THE SEA CONTAINS AN INNER WORLD, a vast silent deep wonder. Upon its outer surface man leaves no imprint in his short history. No whims of man, nor even his seemingly gigantic steps forward, make an impression upon the imperturbable calm of the divine source. Yet in the meeting and the counter-meeting of the surface tidal flow, my physical being reacts to the stimulating challenge.

IT IS STRANGE that here I find a paradox, the challenge and the peace in answer to Life's many moods. This too is the pattern of God within my life, the challenge and the peace. The most conflicting and most persistent problem which faces me is that of patience: the urge always to rush headlong into every situation, the failure to ride out each storm calmly. Here, many times watching the unceasing flow of the under current of strength always flowing into me, is a lesson in Faith. The tremendous inflow of sustenance from the love of God is yet another phase of life reflected in the mystery of the sea.

There is singular drama in the sea which relates to the human pattern of man: like the quiet tide pools beside the shore which support myriad types of minute life. As the tide ebbs, their very existence depends on the returning flow. However, at the beginning of the ebbing tide the little creatures do not rush around frantically seeking the life-giving waters which move in rhythm outward from the shore. Instead they rest quietly, conserving their energies, filling themselves with the warmth of

sunlight whose rays fill their pool and reflect in beauty on their surface. At the return of the tide they are renewed and life activity begins again. This is an important lesson for man in his hurried routine. There should be, at regular intervals, a short resting period mentally and physically, a gathering together of his energies. Then at the return of the tide, when the life-giving, life-creating love of God flows in and renews, man can do his work in the world and be ready to meet each task clearly and with new strength. The problems which seemed to have had no solution will have an answer and man will be supplied with courage instead of besetting despair and fear.

IN THE DRAMA OF THE SEA life is unfolded the word of God in simple language for me.

— Zelma Dennis

WING MEMORY

Bodies remember; birds have a vivid
Memory in their lovely wings;
What else, when all her senses dull,
To the far north the robin brings?

O Thou, Who in the semblance of a dove
To the Son of man didst come,
Be to my soul, when mind and body fail,
The wings — and bear her Home.

— A. E. Johnson

TO A POTENTIAL SPIRITUAL ASPIRANT

Paul Hourihan

You have read the scriptures, heard them expounded from pulpits, and you sense they contain a vital message, some tremendous meaning that will make life real for you. Still they remain a great mystery. And God is still remote from you, though you long to grow close to him. Deep within, that yearning is there and has gnawed at you for longer than you can remember. Of late it has grown worse. Your restlessness has increased, you have begun to lose yourself in worldly things. You run after sense pleasures, excitements of various kinds. Many others before you have run the same course and yet have changed themselves in time, have turned, have seen the light. Some became great souls. You probably know of them already. For you read a great deal. You keep hoping to find in the written word the secret that keeps eluding you—some book, some single thought that might explain it all and illumine your ever-darkening path.

BUT YOU NEVER find it. And you return to the scriptures. They are still beautiful, but still mysterious, difficult, they seem like a trackless wilderness. The sermons on Sunday do not seem to help. You envy the ministers and priests for their faith, their strength of purpose, their confident grasp of things that torment you with their mystery. Occasionally you talk to others about your problem, but they do not help. They tell you to have faith, or to pray, or they say religion is a mystery. The minister says that you are going through a period of trial, that this doubt and restlessness that plague you are a cross you have to bear. Everybody has to carry his cross and this one is yours.

But it is a cross you have been carrying for years, without understanding, to no purpose. You are tempted to forget about the whole thing, admit that you can never unlock the secret of what it all means, this thing called spiritual life, you are tempted to put it out of your mind once and for all and give yourself completely to a life of worldliness and escape. But you persist a while longer. You continue to hope. But your faith is an empty thing and you wonder if it has not always been empty. You believe, but without conviction, and *your belief does nothing to make life different for you,* nothing to affect the way you live. You envy those who, knowing no more of what religion is than you do, are contented in their easy and credulous passivity. You sometimes wish you could be like them, as you were once, long ago, before the seriousness of life dawned on you. But

you cannot be like them and, really, would not want to be.

THE ONES YOU TRULY envy are those who somehow have made contact with the God of the scriptures, the God that is supposed to be in every man. You feel that if something like that could happen to you, you would have found everything, you would want nothing else. But you hesitate to talk about this to others. You do not know how to express what you feel anyway. And it seems presumptuous to expect that you, with all your doubts and fears and weaknesses, only an individual among so many others, might directly experience the Divine Spirit in your own life. Isn't this pride?

Still the hunger remains, will not be quelled. Sentences from scripture haunt your mind. Late at night sometimes they come to you, like an echo from some other life, like something you have already known somewhere. But where?...*Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall know God.* Does this mean what it says? Can God be "known"? How do you start? What do you do? *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.* Is this possible? Why did Christ put it that way? *The kingdom of God is within you.* But you do not feel this kingdom. It is as far from you as if it did not exist. The words seem like poetry. But you know otherwise. There is something there, something wonderful and unique, if you could only find your way to it. But the way is barred, it seems.

YOU TRY PRAYER. You are not an atheist. You have been praying all your life in one way or another. But you have prayed so much, in so many ways, at so many times, and it has not helped you, it seems. You do not think it will help you now. You feel that you do not know *how* to pray. The words are mechanical by now, the formulas are empty. If there is a God, or no God, it is all the same. Your prayers would be no different, and the results would be the same. *How* should you pray? If only you could meet someone who could tell you this. You recall phrases like "the masters of prayer" and "the ladder of contemplation," which suggest that prayer long and difficult art. Your minister does not say this, others do not talk this way, but you feel it is so.

It is the same with meditation, only more so. You often wonder just what it is, what meditation means. You know in general, of course. But how did you go about meditating yourself? The key is there, you feel. It is true, no one in your family talked about meditation. Your religious training, such as it was, did not stress that. It was all exhortations to a life of virtue and unselfishness and faith. Nothing about periods of silence or the art of

prayer, *nothing about how one gained the ability* to be unselfish and virtuous habitually.

In fact, you did not see much unselfishness around you even among your more religious friends. Your family were decent people, but ordinary. There was nothing spiritual about them, whatever that might really mean. And the priests and ministers were secretly disappointing. You did not know why. They talked about God and Christ frequently but they seemed to lack something. You did not know just what it was. They were often good speakers, forceful, responsible men. But they did not inspire you. *You did not think about them when you left them.* You did not want to imitate them. You admired some of them, *but they did not make you feel that they knew by experience* the truths they preached from the pulpits. There should be something more.

AND THEN ONE DAY, suddenly, your life changed. You met someone who talked with you, in a strange new way, of God and religion and prayer and the scriptures. You asked him was there something you could *do* to bring you closer to God, really closer, and he said there was. Were there specific practices you could follow to learn how to meditate and he said there were. Could God be known directly, experienced in this life, and he said He could be, that many had done so, and you too could have that experience. Then you knew that God, answering your prayers for guidance, had sent him into your life for this very purpose.

EAGERLY you took your first steps...

SAINTS AND MYSTICS are after all human beings conditioned in their intellectual beliefs by the different cultures in which they were brought up. And in so far as they repeated the doctrines of the particular religions to which they were attached, they contradicted one another. But sometimes they transcended these different cultures, and sought to utter the pure essence of religion itself, and when they did so their utterances show a surprising measure of agreement.

—W. T. Stace in
RELIGION AND THE MODERN MIND

MATURE PRAYER

Rev. H. Richard Rasmusson

Alexis Carrel, Nobel prize winner in medicine, stated, "The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of the secretion of the glands....As a physician, I have seen men, after all other therapy had failed, lifted out of disease and melancholy by the serene effort of prayer."

PRAYER IS one of the great resources of the human spirit. We cheat on ourselves when we don't pray. The Gospels portray prayer as a central experience in the life of Jesus. He prayed in the morning. "In the morning a great while before day, he rose and went into a lonely place, and there prayed." He prayed at night - "And when it was evening....they went to Gethsemane ....Sit here while I pray." He prayed at his baptism; he prayed before choosing his disciples. He said to them, "After this manner pray."

Now, much of our praying is unintelligent and of little avail. For one thing it is often self-centered. It has no wide horizons. W. H. Auden expresses this kind of useless praying in this caricature of immature prayer, "O God....Leave Thy heavens and come down to our earth of water clocks and hedges. Become our uncle, look after baby, amuse Grandfather, escort Madame to the opera, help Willy with his homework, introduce Murial to a handsome naval officer. Be...like us, and we will love you as we love ourselves." The Bible is not unaware of this kind of praying. It says, "You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss."

But prayer can be intelligent and mature. It is mature prayer that I wish to consider.

WE BEGIN BY saying that mature prayer accepts the uniformity and dependability of nature. Prayer is no hocus-pocus that can change the law-abiding orderliness of the universe. God is a God of Order and Dependability and his creation reflects this, making science possible. But it isn't a mechanical order, but a Character order. God is not a prisoner of the so-called laws of nature; *these "laws" are expressions of his Nature or Character* which, being dependable and consistent, make for a dependable and orderly universe.

The dependability of nature being the expression of God's Character and Purpose means that God can do what he wants to the world at any time. If he chooses to do what from our knowledge of "law" appears to be a miracle, he can. This is his world and it lies fluid in the hands of his purpose. But his purpose is a law-abiding order be-

cause such a world has benefits and possibilities for transcending a world where no dependability pertains.

As Dr. Fosdick writes in his *Meaning of Prayer:* "....The world is not governed by law,....it is governed by God according to law. He providentially utilizes, manipulates and combines his own invariable ways of acting to serve his own eternal purposes."

And this order applies also to the order of Spirit. What is science? Isn't science the discovery of and working obediently with the laws of the physical world, to bring us wonders of so many kinds that we cannot name them? What is prayer? Prayer is working obediently with the laws of the Spirit. God is Spirit, Jesus said, and when we are attuned to this Spirit, power, peace and blessings innumerable can be released into us. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." "Being strengthened by God's Spirit in the inward man." "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." It is obedience to the laws of Spirit. It is fulfilling the Order of Spirit and getting appropriate results. This is mature prayer.

FURTHER mature prayer is devout thinking. Martin Luther in his *Table Talk* reminded his hearers that the ancient fathers defined prayer as *ascensus mentes ad Deum* —"A climbing of the heart to God." A climbing of the heart to God is also prayer.

And the Bible has many illustrations of this. When the Psalmist said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," he was praying the prayer of devout thinking. Psalm 8 is really a prayer of devout thinking, "When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars....What is man that thou art mindful of him, and....dost care for him?"

THERE IS A BEAUTIFUL example of this kind of prayer in *The Apostle* by Sholem Asch. When Peter was confused about the problem of the Greek community and its relation to the faith we are told "he retired within his heart and put the question to his faith." "Thus it was always with him; there was an inner door which the power of his faith opened for him. Always after prayer he was aware of clarification, a grace which made the crooked paths straight before him and threw upon them the illumination of understanding and peace."

William James tells of a period in his life when he underwent deep depression—"a horrible fear of my own existence." This fear was so invasive and powerful that, he says, if it had not been for his clinging to scripture promises, "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath

are the everlasting arms," "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden," "I am the Resurrection and the life," 'I think I should really have gone insane.' But prayer brought him through. Mature prayer brought him back to light and life and it was prayer as devout thinking.

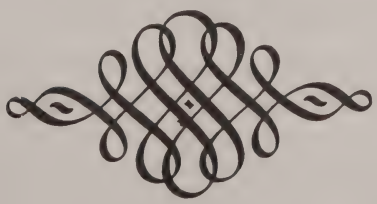
WE FACE, LASTLY, prayer as self-dedication. This is the hardest form of prayer. It was William Temple who wrote, "Prayer is very difficult and needs all our strength; it is the most difficult thing any man ever attempts to do, *for it is the effort to see the world through God's eyes,* and to give ourselves wholly to do his will." Such was Isaiah's experience in the Temple and the issue of his prayer was, "Lord, here am I, send me." Prayer is self-dedication.

Jesus is teaching us such prayer when he prayed, "For their sakes I consecrate myself." The New Testament in plain English says, "For their sakes I make myself holy." It appeared in his Gethsemane prayer, "Not my will, but thine, be done." We pray it when we pray, often with no realization of what we are praying, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

ONLY AS PRAYER issues in self-dedication is it saved from being corrupted by self-centeredness. Someone has said, "Cease disobeying God's will or cease praying." Prayer is self-surrender and self-dedication, opening the life to God, that his will can be done on earth through us. "For their sakes I consecrate myself."

LOVE, AS AN AFFECTION, cannot be commanded, but beneficence for duty's sake may, even though we are not impelled to it by any inclination—nay, are even repelled by a natural and unconquerable aversion. This is *practical* love—a love which is seated in the will, and not in the attractions of sense—in principles of action and not tender sympathy and it is this love alone which can be commanded.

— Kant



THE LAMP OF WISDOM

Mark Halpern

HOW OFTEN MAN sighs wistfully for Aladdin's lamp, with which to change conditions according to the ideal pattern of his heart's desire. Even as Omar Khayyam expressed it in the Rubaiyat:

"Ah, love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this Sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire?"

But it is within himself that man must find the lasting peace and serenity he has been searching after in the world without. Then he ceases to look outside himself for the remedy of his unrest and discontent. When he faces the truth that the conditions in which he finds himself, offer the very opportunity to bring to the fore the transforming and transmuting magic power of his own Divine Nature, then he has found the key to psychological adjustment and to harmonious human relationships. He has indeed found the key to the Serene and Masterful Life!

Then it will matter little what the outer conditions of his life happen to be. Whether he be rich or poor in worldly goods; living in a humble cabin or in a palace;enjoying the plaudits and adulation of the world of men, or unknown and unsung in forgotten obscurity—he will live serene and in perfect rest at the Lighted Center of Truth and Realty within.

* * * *

IN THE LONG AGO OF ARABIA there lived a young man called Ahmed. All his life had been spent on the desert, where he learned to tame and ride the world's finest horses.

But the horses were not Ahmed's own. They belonged to Hassan Bey, the leader of the tribe. Ahmed was only one of the several hundred followers of Hassan Bey, and often he thought he was only a menial slave, because of the way he was ordered about.

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR his beloved Tamirah, one of the young women of the tribe, who had always given him bounteously of the love and kindness of her gentle heart, Ahmed felt life would have been unbearable. It was their habit to meet in the early evening at the edge of the camp and commune with each other, until their hearts seemed as one. There

they would sit in the hushed stillness of the mysterious desert night, gazing up at the brightly gleaming stars, which seemed so close that one might think he could reach up and touch them with his fingers.

"Ahmed—why are thine eyes filled with sadness?"

"Thou knowest why, Tamirah. Have I not spoken of it to thee before?"

"Thou art still unhappy, then, with thy life here among us? Thou still longest to be far from the sands of the desert—in Bagdad, perhaps?"

"Yes—yes, in Bagdad! I have had enough of the desert. Sand—sand—nothing but sand day and night. And I have had more than enough of Hassan Bey and his proud commanding voice. I have had enough of this whole tribe!"

"And of me, Ahmed?"

"Nay, not of thee, Tamirah. Thou knowest I love thee. Thou hast been kind to me. In my illness three years ago, when I lay abandoned for dead, thou alone didst nurse me back to life. I owe thee very much."

"And yet thou wouldst leave me. Thou knowest I would go with thee unto the farthest ends of the world, if thou wouldst but say the word."

"I have not said I would leave thee, Tamirah."

"Yet I can read it in thine eyes. My heart tells me thou wouldst leave me. Thy people are not good enough for thee, Ahmed."

"Thy fears are foolish, Tamirah. Besides, how could I leave—where would I go without anything of my own but what I have on my back? I have nothing but my foolish dreams. I shall live and die a nobody on the endless sands of the desert. It would take Aladdin's lamp to make something out of my life."

"Hast thou ever prayed to Allah for Aladdin's lamp?"

"Thou speakest like a child. Thou knowest there never was such a lamp. 'Tis only a story as unreal as the mirage of the desert."

"Thou hast no faith, Ahmed. 'Tis no wonder thou hast never had thy wishes fulfilled."

AHMED WAS SILENT at her gentle words of reproof. What if she were right? What if Aladdin's lamp were a reality—and could be obtained by the grace of Allah?. . .

Later that night, when all were sleeping, he stole out of his tent and crept over the cool sands, until he came to the spot where he had sat some hours before with Tamirah.

Prostrating himself on the sand, so that he faced the East, he implored the Creator with all the desperation of his yearning heart:

"Grant me my wish, O Allah. Grant to me, thy humble servant Ahmed, Alladin's lamp."

No sooner had Ahmed uttered the last word, then he saw close to him the lamp! Gasping in unbelief, he reached out and touched it with his fingers to make certain it was real.

THE NEXT INSTANT a gigantic genie stood there towering over him and bowing in the Oriental salaam. "What is thy command, Master?"

"I—I would like to be dressed like a King, and taken to Bagdad—to make my home in a royal palace, with the best of everything to eat and with treasure chests full of the most precious gems."

In the twinkling of an eye, it was even as Ahmed had asked. There he was in the palace, at a banquet table laden with the choicest of viands. And beside him were coffers overflowing with sparkling gems of the rarest kind.

And so it was with everything. He was another Aladdin! All he had to do was to rub the lamp. The genie would appear with his usual salaam, and ask to be commanded.

But somehow, as time went on, Ahmed, much to his wonder, did not feel content. In fact, he was far from happy. The luxuries and pleasures of his seraglio began to satiate him. He began to feel that with all his power and riches, he had not one true friend. He was beloved by none, and there seemed to be none desirous of his love. He sensed the hypocrisy of the sycophants who fawned upon him—even of the beautiful young damsels in his seraglio, who said they loved him whenever he handed them costly gifts from his coffers of gems. But he could not be certain they were insincere—it was only his own suspicions.

ONE DAY IT DAWNED ON HIM how to learn the truth. A rub of the lamp brought the genie.

"I desire to be made invisible."

And it was even as Ahmed had asked. When he saw that all in his palace were oblivious of his presence, he knew that the genie had not failed.

NOW AHMED TOOK to visiting the homes and favorite haunts of his friends, to learn from the talk amongst themselves their true feelings towards him. He discovered that his worst suspicions were justified. They all ridiculed and mocked him with words of contempt. They told how easy it was to dupe him with their flattery and their pretense at friendship—and thus partake of his riches for their own advantage.

Ahmed swallowed the galling bitterness of his disillusion as he returned to his palace. He had exchanged the pure open air of the desert, the straightforward ways of his own people, for a world of lying deceit and hypocrisy. How he longed to hear the voice of gentle Tamirah—to see the tender affection in her soft dark eyes. She had given him love and kindness, when he had no gifts of any kind with which to repay her.

Once he was alone, he rubbed the lamp, and to the genie he said: "I wish to be returned to my people, and I wish to be rid of this accursed lamp."

"And hast thou no further wish, Master?"

"No. I wish nothing for myself but to be back with my people."

"And thou desirest nothing for none other—for some one, perhaps, to whom thou wouldst repay a debt of gratitude?"

"Ah, yes—there is one whom I had forgotten. I would wish to take to her the choicest of the pearls in my treasure chests. For it was her faith that brought me these riches and taught me that there is not enough wealth in the world to make a man content, if he finds not first contentment within himself. I am no longer filled with unrest. My heart has found peace in knowing that it has the power to give love. For it is love that is most needed in life . . ."

The genie gave his salaam and was gone . . .

AND AHMED FOUND HIMSELF with his own people—and Tamirah. It was the same desert, the same Tamirah, but never had they

seemed as beautiful as now. The restless discontent had vanished from Ahmed's heart; leaving in its stead the beauty of an abiding faith in the great worth of the hidden intangible things within man himself . . .

* * * *

EVERY INDIVIDUAL has an Aladdin's lamp—his very own, if he but knew it. It is the unquenchable and undying flame of his Immortal Self, the Lamp of Wisdom within his own soul. Having found that Lamp, man is at rest. He has become a haven of peace unto all men; and is thus doing his part toward banishing all discord and unrest from the earth ....

THE DECISION

The morning breaks
And ushers in
A bright new day
Where night has been.

Wide open doors
And windows clean
Invite all men
To life unseen.

Two roads lead there—
Each man must make
The secret choice
Which one to take.

— Loreta Inman

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM

Carol M. Mandola

SINCE THE BEGINNING of time men have sought knowledge, health, success and contentment outside themselves. They are in bondage to every desire the flesh can father. It is the passions of mortal man which continually blind him, and the fear of taking unfamiliar steps which prevents him from advancing toward the Truth and the light within.

Man must free himself from all outside conditions which hold him in bondage. Man is a free agent, in reality—morally and mentally. God is a neutral Force and forces His Good upon no one. He makes the sun to shine upon the good and evil alike. God's All-Good is impersonal and it is for man himself to choose the path he will follow by the divine heritage of free will. Man alone makes his own choice.

WHAT DOES MAN really desire? What constitutes his happiness? Does he yearn for the still sense of peace which comes from within—so that no matter what happens he remains tranquil and poised? Above all, does he foster the law of service, of selflessness?

No man remains in the chain of bondage when he serves his fellowman in secret, out of pure love for humanity, without thought of compensation or reward. The Soul knows, the Father seeth in secret: this is sufficient blessing.

WHAT COUNTS is the motive; for everything in life, there is a motive. The happiness and contentment which man is seeking can come only through service, through selflessness, which is a power that lifts one away from the shadow of self to the joy and inward peace known only to those who are free.

He who builds his life around service to mankind, in great and little things, finds within him something which can never be overcome, something which can never know bondage.

I am, in God's hands, my own master.

— Bossuet

DO YOU FEEL FORGIVEN?

Mildred Long

EVERYONE NEEDS to feel forgiven. In the family, in friendships, in all human relationships, in relation to God, everyone needs to know he is accepted, forgiven, loved. The absence of this feeling results in misery, all the way from mild inferiorities to gross mental disturbance and criminality.

Forgiveness is a universal need, for sin and departure from the laws of God are universal. Yet how few, how very few, really feel forgiven!

TO FEEL FORGIVEN means to accept God's proffered gift of forgiveness and therefore cease to grieve about the past, cease to punish ourselves, cease to be a martyr, or to feel inferior. It means to forgive ourselves and be at peace with ourselves and God.

You know how it is when you think a friend is holding something against you. You stay away. You try to hide. You do not like yourself, and you fear your friend's condemnation. Any sin or sense of sin produces these results, not only between friends but also between man and God.

This was the trouble with Adam and Eve when they no longer met God in the garden for daily communion. God sought them out and asked, "Where are you?" And they pleaded that they were naked. It was their guilt, their knowing they had disobeyed, that made them aware of nakedness. And indeed, they were naked in their souls. By disobedience they had thrown off the garment of righteousness and the protection of divine raiment.

Sin and disobedience do separate us from God. But there is also much separation at this point that is not merited. Somehow we cling to the feeling of not being forgiven long after we have confessed our waywardness and asked for divine forgiveness. The thief on the cross asked for forgiveness (in spirit if not in words) and we have every reason to believe that he died in peace accepting Jesus' gracious promise of Paradise. Why do not we make this kind of a quick transition from guilt to redemption? None of us will deny that full redemption, full forgiveness and cleansing, are promised. Why do we not experience the perfect release of such acceptance?

BASICALLY, THE REASON is that self-blame makes us self-centered and self-conscious. We are looking at ourselves through the dark lens of condemnation instead of the bright light of redeeming

grace. God does not condemn us. Why should we condemn ourselves? God offers us forgiveness and love and restitution to fellowship. Why should we refuse? Not to forgive ourselves is to reject His grace.

And this is all based on self-centeredness. We feel we need to be punished. So we go on punishing ourselves. Some do this to the extent of becoming martyrs to life. We are so self-centered we rather enjoy the agony of regret and suffering. We are thereby placing our judgment about the depth of our sin above God's. Thus we try to "play God."

Not to forgive ourselves separates us from our true selves, from spiritual life and understanding. To be out of fellowship within ourselves is to put up a barrier between us and our fellowmen, between us and God. The thief on the cross did better than we do. He was willing to let go of his sin and his past and trust his soul to the promise of Jesus. The complete yielding up of the ego enabled him to receive.

AS WE GIVE, SO shall we receive. "Our greatest asset is our capacity to receive." If therefore we give up ourselves and our self-centeredness to God, let go of the ego, relinquish the will, we shall then be able to receive His forgiveness. And when we give Him our all, He can give us His all: His forgiveness, His full redemption, His healing, His very life. By this complete giving we may become a branch in the Vine, a vital, eternal part of the divine life.

Our sense of guilt may be self-imposed. It may have no basis of reality. The events or deeds that make us feel guilty may be rightly catalogued only as mistakes in judgment, and faulty knowledge, and natural growing pains. *But if we have the feeling of guilt, the effect upon our subconscious minds is almost as strong as if we were guilty of deliberate sin.* We can suffer and writhe under the pain of this "serpent in the bosom" which periodically rears its ugly head. And even we can be driven into methods of escape from this torture such as alcoholism, nervous breakdown, insanity, or criminality.

THEREFORE LET US take heed to ourselves at this point. Let us make sure that we become willing to let go of all the past with all its mistakes and aberrations, give it and ourselves completely into the hands of our loving Father, receive His forgiveness and go free. The result will be peace of mind, fellowship with God, and outgoingness toward our fellowmen.

THE SEED AND THE HARVEST

It has been written, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The seed we sow today determines the harvest we shall reap tomorrow.

Man has within himself the seed of his own destruction and the seed of his own redemption.

The poisoned arrow, sent out to kill, turns about and pierces the heart of him who sends it out. "For all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."

When we transgress the laws of God, we create a debt which, sooner or later must be paid, for we make ourselves liable to those laws. When we transgress one of the laws of God, we throw ourselves out of adjustment with that law and, sooner or later, we must be brought back into adjustment.

The conflict going on between the nations of the world, represents this adjustment. When one nation attacks another, the aggressor is building up a debt which, too, must be paid, sooner or later, and the nation attacked is, through this aggression, adjusting some debt it created earlier through its aggression of some other nation—perhaps the same nation which is now attacking it. This has been going on down through the years and the ages and it will continue until the books are balanced. Evolution is ever upward and the goal of evolution is PERFECTION—the reuniting of man with God. From God we come, unto God we return.

VICTORY THROUGH SURRENDER

When, through Spiritual awakening, man can say, with the Master, "Father, not my will but Thine be done", that is the great surrender; that is the re-birth; that is the resurrection from the dead and the ascension into the Fulness of Life.

Through this great surrender, man gains victory over self and over death.

— HARRY HALSEY STARRETT

NOTICES and COMMENTS

NEW ADVISORS. This month we are pleased to announce that Marion Mill Preminger, formerly of Hollywood, Calif., has kindly accepted our invitation to become an Advisor-at-large for Fellowship in Prayer. Mrs. Preminger is widely known in this country and abroad as a lecturer and writer and has gained an esteemed reputation as a disciple and aide of Dr. Albert Schweitzer in his African work. Her notable social and intellectual background, as well as her religious dedication to the noble cause for which Dr. Schweitzer stands, make her indeed a very valuable addition to Fellowship in Prayer...This is also true of Professor A. N. Molina of Sindangan, Philippines, who has consented to serve as an FIP Advisor for the Far Eastern Zone. Professor Molina has been a friend and sympathizer of our work for many years, so that we are encouraged and gratified to have him assume the position of Advisor after so long. He has been active in religious work in the Philippines for most of his life. We are naturally grateful to have him with us in his new capacity.

CONTRIBUTORS. It is pleasant to be able to print posthumously one of the late A. E. Johnson's poems, *Wing Memory,* on page 19, which his widow Catherine Johnson of New York City has kindly supplied to us. Many of our readers will recall the fine poetry of Professor Johnson which appeared in FIP until his death in Spain in 1959...We extend a Warm welcome to three writers appearing in this issue for the first time: Miss Maud Strike of Shellbrook, Saskatchewan; Mr. Lawrence Johnson of Mamaroneck, N. Y.; and Mrs. William Fritzsche of East Canton, Ohio. Miss Strike is represented with *Easter Lilies* on page 7, Mr. Johnson with *To a Saint in the Moonlight* on page 9, and Mrs. Fritzsche with her brief but cogent prayer on page 10.

MANUSCRIPTS INVITED. This publication welcomes new writers at all times. Every manuscript is given careful and grateful consideration.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies. Certain back issues are also available.

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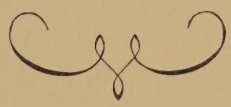
You go to your saint and find God working and manifest in him. He got near to God by some saint of his that went before him, or that stood beside him, in whom he saw the divine presence. That saint again lighted his fire at some flame before him; and so the power of saint-hoods animates and fills the world.

— Phillips Brooks



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